both. . * . Don't you think so, Madame Gide?" And my wife pretended not to hear.

And this pig is a painter. He paints on wood because his frantic brush-strokes would go right through the canvas. With this detail I leave him.

I let him believe that I am much like him. (He says: 'The Church/' then adds, so that you will be sure of understanding: "Ecclesia!" He says: 'What we need today is a cult — *cultus,* rites . . ," then, doubtless failing to find the Latin word or the Greek word, he is satisfied with repeating and rolling the *r* a bit more: *<e "Bfites?)*

22 June

For the fourth time I take up again from the very beginning this miserable book, over which I have labored so much already. The great improvisers of today would call this impotence or mania. Today I am almost at the point where I could agree with them. Yet toward the end of the day, after a great effort, I think I have set the amorphous mass in motion again.

The piano came yesterday. Good study of Chopin's wonderful preludes, which I am reviewing all together.

Every time that "success" has approached me, I have made faces at it.

Already in '91,1 remember: I was with Pierre Louys; we met Rette at the d'Harcourt, where we had gone for dinner, I believe. The latter begins an elaborate praise of *Les Cahiers tfAndre Walter,*[21] which has just appeared and which he "has just finished reading." I can hear his sentence: "It is one of the twelve (or twenty) important books that have appeared since . . /' At these words I get up to hang my coat a bit farther away, leaving Rette with half of his compliment unspoken. When I sit down again, Pierre Louys leans toward me and says in my ear: "My boy, when someone compliments you, you

could at least listen. It looks as if compliments drive you away." This was true. It still is today. Too much pride perhaps; also fear of blarney. Flatterers catch on at once and don't let themselves get caught again.

On 29 June, in reply to a note from Marcel Drouin about Blum's book, I had written this—which I later considered it wiser not to send him:

"Yes, Blum's book can do harm. . . . People will seek in it not a [c]new light' on a question which belongs, I should say, more to the field of ethics than to sociology—but rather an *authorization.* As for me, I first read the book very hastily, then, embarrassed at hearing everyone

[21] Andre Gide's first volume.